

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01    YAOUND 04810 151340Z  
ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 SS-15 PM-04 SP-02 SAJ-01 INR-07  
SSO-00 INRE-00 /050 W  
----- 010317 /53

O 151200Z DEC 76  
FM AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 486

S E C R E T YAOUNDE 4810

STADIS//////////

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY SHAUFELE FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1  
TAGS: PFOR, MILI, PINS, ACOM, CM  
SUBJECT: WATTS, SECURITY ASSISTANCE, POTENTIAL SOVIET THREAT  
CENTRAL AFRICA

REF: (A) YAOUNDE 4756; (B) YAOUNDE 4702; (C) YAOUNDE 4568;  
(D) YAOUNDE 4552; (E) YAOUNDE 3939; (F) YAOUNDE 3938;  
(G) YAOUNDE 3132; (H) STATE 193355; (I) YAOUNDE 2562; (J)  
STATE 171954; (K) YAOUNDE 2426; (L) YAOUNDE 2417; (M)  
YAOUNDE 3367; (N) INSPECTOR'S DRAFT MEMO ON POLITICAL AFFAIRS  
OF NOV 76; (O) YAOUNDE 4791

1. SUMMARY: IN ACCORDANCE INSPECTOR'S DRAFT RECOMMENDATION (REF N)  
I BELIEVE TIME HAS COME FOR DEPARTMEN "CONDUCT A REAPPRAISAN  
OF CAMEROON'S IMPORTANCE TO US POLITICAL INTERESTS" IN VIEW A)  
CAMEROON'S STABILITY AND RESPONSIBLE ROLE IN THIS PART OF AFRICA  
AND INTERNATIONAL FORA; B) OUR WATTS REQUEST; C) POTENTIAL SOVIET  
THREAT IN CENTRAL AFRICA; AND D) CAMEROONIAN REQUEST FOR SECURITY  
ASSISTANCE. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED FOREIGN MINISTRY NOTE IN RESPONSE TO OUR  
26TH AUGUST NOTE REQUESTING PERMISSION ESTABLISH WATTS BASE STATION  
DOUALA WHICH STATES: "THIS REQUEST IS CURRENTLY OBJECT THOROUGH  
STUDY WHOSE CONCLUSIONS WILL BE COMMUNICATED AS SOON AS  
POSSIBLE." WHILE IT IS TO BE NOTED THAT SINCE SUBJECT  
WATTS FIRST BROACHED TO GURC AUG 25 (REF G) WE HAVE ATTEMPTED  
TO KEEP IT SEPARATE FROM CAMEROONIAN REQUEST FOR SECURITY  
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ASSISTANCE. HOWEVER, I BELIEVE THAT IN VIEW OF TEMPORIZING

NATURE OF NOTE, IT IS TIME FOR DEPARTMENT TO CONSIDER MAKING HEGELIAN "AUFHEBUNG," I.E., ELEVATION-LINKAGE-SUSPENSION OF SEVERAL ISSUES.

3. REFTELS GIVE FAIRLY COMPLETE PICTURE OF VARIOUS ELEMENTS WHICH NEED NOT BE BELABORED IN ORDER TO SPECIFY INTERLINKAGE THESE ISSUES. EBOUA, PRESIDENCY SECRETARY GENERAL SUMMONED ME ON JULY 5 PURSUANT INSTRUCTIONS PRESIDENT AHIDJO AND GAVE ME ESSENTIALLY SAME BRIEFING (REFTELS K AND L) PRESIDENT AHIDJO GAVE FRENCH AMBASSADOR DUBOIS DEC 4 (REFTEL B). HOWEVER, I WAS ASKED FOR SECURITY ASSISTANCE. WE DO NOT KNOW IF FRENCH WERE ASKED TO INCREASE THEIR ASSISTANCE IN RECENT MEETING. HOWEVER, WE DO KNOW THAT CAMEROONIANS UNHAPPY WITH QUALITY AND QUANTITY FRENCH MILITARY ASSISTANCE AND ARE CASTING ABOUT FOR OTHER SOURCES OF SUPPLY, INCLUDING US. FRENCH, IN REACTION TO AHIDJO CRITICISM OF OBSOLETE EQUIPMENT EXPRESSED FURING STATE VISIT LAST JULY, ARE EXPECTED GRADUALLY TO REDUCE SIZE OF 95-MAN CURRENT MILITARY SUPPORT MISSION. WE ALREADY AWARE SOME DEPARTURES WITHOUT REPLACEMENT. AS FOR ALTERNATIVE

SOURCES OF SUPPLY, GURC HAS OBTAINED 2 PATROL BOATS FROM PRC AND MAY BE ATTEMPTING OBTAIN APC'S FROM ITALY AND HAS REQUESTED EQUIPMENT FROM FRG.

4. WHILE I PERSONALLY OPPOSED TO USG BECOMING ARMS MERCHANTS TO WORLD, AS MY PUBLISHED WORKS AND PUBLIC STATEMENTS BEAR OUT, I ALSO AM FIRMLY CONVINCED THAT WE SHOULD ASSIST A COUNTRY LIKE CAMEROON WHICH MAKES LEGITIMATE AND MODEST REQUEST TO MEET ITS SECURITY NEEDS AGAINST PERCEIVED THREATS FROM NEIGHBORS, WHO MAY BE USED AS SURROGATES FOR EXTRA-CONTINENTAL FORCES.

5. I BELIEVE GURC REQUEST TO USG FOR SECURITY ASSISTANCE DESERVES SUPPORT ON ITS OWN MERIT AND, GIVEN PRESENT STATE CAMEROONIAN CONCERN ABOUT STABILITY IN AREA, I MUST CONCLUDE THAT US IS MOST LOGICAL SUPPLIER OF THEIR EQUIPMENT NEEDS. I ALSO AGREE REFTEL H STATEMENT: "DEPARTMENT'S (NOT WHOLLY FORTUITOUS) INTEREST IN CAMEROON AS POTENTIAL BASE FOR WATTS RELAY STATION WILL OBVIOUSLY HAVE KEY ROLE TO PLAY IN THE EQUATION" OF BEING RESPONSIVE TO GURC SECURITY ASSISTANCE REQUIREMENTS. THIS PERCEPTION OF LINKAGE BETWEEN GURC

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SECURITY ASSISTANCE REQUEST AND OUR WATTS REQUEST ALSO SHARED BY SENIOR INSPECTOR TANGUY DURING COURSE POST INSPECTION LAST MONTH. I BELIEVE THAT THE TIME HAS COME WHEN USG SHOULD LOOK AT CAMEROON IN RELATION TO TIS NEIGHBORS AND SOVIET DESIGNS ON AREA AND, IF WE ARE SERIOUS IN WISHING TO HAVE A WATTS BASE STATION, THEN WE SHOULD CONSIDER MEANS BY WHICH WE CAN ATTAIN THIS END AND ALSO MAKE CONCRETE CONTRIBUTION TO STABILITY OF REGION AND SECURITY OF CAMEROON.

6. I BELIEVE ALTERNATIVE COURSE OF TURNING DONW GURC REQUEST MAY EVENTUALLY FORCE GURC EITHER TO SEARCH FOR ADDITIONAL ALTERNATIVES OR COME TO ACCOMMODATION WITH THOSE COUNTRIES PERCEIVED AS POSING GREATEST THREAT. SINCE, APART FROM THOSE SOURCES LISTED PARA 2 ABOVE, MOST ALTERNATIVE ARMS EXPORTERS ARE COMMUNIST, I DO NOT THINK IT IS IN OUR BEST INTEREST TO LET THIS HAPPEN. MOREOVER, US RUNS RISK OF CONVEYING IMPRESSION THAT GURC IS ACTUALLY BEING PENALIZED FOR ITS RESPONSIBLE MODERATION AND ITS FAILURE TO CREATE PROBLEMS IN REGION OR INTERNATIONAL BODIES.

7. THIS AND ANY PREVIOUS YAOUNDE STADIS MESSAGES CAN BE GIVEN WHATEVER ADDITIONAL DISSEMINATION CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE BY DEPARTMENT.  
SPIRO

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